

August 2022



# CONSULAR NEWS

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Greetings, everyone.

My name is Kristin Bongiovanni, and I am the new Visas Chief here at U.S. Embassy Port-au-Prince.

Clandestine migration — especially by boat — is a dangerous journey that often results in being returned to Haiti, serious injury, and possibly death. Just last month, we saw the tragic news of a boat capsizing off the coast of the Bahamas that killed at least 17 Haitian nationals. Despite these incidents, thousands of Haitians still choose to migrate irregularly, risking their lives in the process.

However, migration and travel to the United States does not need to be dangerous or life-threatening. The Consular section understands and is sympathetic to the fact that U.S. citizens have been waiting a long time to be reunited with their family members who are still in Haiti. I encourage you to continue relying on Consular services as the best means to obtain the necessary documents for you and your loved ones to travel safely. Please be sure to [visit our website](#) to receive the most up-to-date information on our services and travel guidance.

U.S. Embassy Port-au-Prince will provide in-person seats for the upcoming cycle of the Foreign Service Officer Test (FSOT) this October. Registration for the FSOT opened August 22nd and will close September 29th. Please be sure to visit [Pearson's testing page](#) for more information and, if interested, register before the window closes. The next page also provides more information on the FSOT and process to become a Foreign Service Officer.

In this issue you will read how Embassy Port-au-Prince participated in this year's International Youth Day celebration. The issue also highlights August 31st as the International Day for People of African Descent.

Finally, the U.S. Department of State's travel advisory for Haiti remains at its highest level, which is "Level 4: Do Not Travel" due to ongoing kidnapping, crime, and civil unrest. However, if you find that you must travel to Haiti, there are resources and information readily accessible for you to evaluate as you finalize your plans. Please review the State Department's [Haiti travel advisory page](#) and sign up for our [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program](#) (STEP).

Kristin Bongiovanni  
*Visas Chief*

## Ask the Consul

## CONSULAR NEWS

This month, we're providing more information on how you can register for the Foreign Service Officer Test or FSOT.

**Q: I am interested in joining the Foreign Service. What are the requirements?**

**A:** The Foreign Service is an exciting and unique career where officers work in embassies and consulates around the world, helping to shape and support U.S. foreign policy. To be eligible, you must be: a U.S. citizen on the date you submit the registration package; at least 20 years old but no older than 59 years of age on the day you submit the registration, and available for worldwide assignments, including Washington, D.C. This list is not exhaustive so please be sure to [visit this website](#) to read more on how to qualify.

**Q: What is the Foreign Service Officer Test (FSOT)?**

**A:** The FSOT is an assessment that evaluates your knowledge, skills, and abilities that are necessary to serve as a Foreign Service Officer. After you select your intended career track or cone as well as complete the FSO application, you will need to register to take the FSOT. It is only proctored at approved locations both domestically and abroad through Pearson VUE. U.S. Embassy Port-au-Prince will proctor the FSOT October 1st and 2nd of this year. Registration is now live until 29 September 2022 or until the Embassy reaches capacity so please follow [this link](#) to register yourself for a seat. The FSOT typically takes three hours to complete and has three distinct sections. For more information about the structure and how to prepare yourself in advance of the test day, please visit the State Department's [FSO Selection Process](#) page.

### Useful Links

- [Foreign Service](#)
- [FSOT Registration](#)
- [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(S.T.E.P.\) Website](#)
- [State Department Haiti Travel Advisory Page](#)
- [ACSPAP@state.gov](mailto:ACSPAP@state.gov)

**Q: How can I best prepare myself for the FSOT? Where can I find out more about the Foreign Service?**

**A:** Although there is not a particular study guide or checklist for the Foreign Service Officer Test, there are resources available with which to familiarize yourself before test day. You could contact your Diplomat in Residence (DIR), download the DOSCareers mobile app to access "retired" questions from the FSOT, as well as review a suggested reading and course lists on the State Department's website. Additionally, you can take a practice FSOT test [available here](#). This list is not exhaustive but the Department's [careers page](#) provides a host of resources that may be useful to you as you prepare for the exam.

### International Youth Day at U.S. Embassy Port-au-Prince

First designated by the United Nations in 2000 and celebrated every August 12, International Youth Day is an awareness campaign that underlines the importance of youth and how governments globally can address issues their youth populations face. Each year, the UN Envoy on Youth designates a core theme with this year's being "Intergenerational Solidarity: Creating a World for All Ages." This theme seeks to highlight the barriers ageism pose for young and old persons alike that have harmful effects on society as a whole.

This year, U.S. Embassy Port-au-Prince hosted a number of youth groups in Haiti to celebrate International Youth Day. The HR department spoke with college-aged students about employment avenues. The Political section spoke with its young guests about democracy and human rights. The Public Diplomacy and Consular sections also shared information on how to study in the United States and best ways to apply for a visa. Finally, Chargé d'Affaires, a.i. Eric Stromayer shared words of encouragement and hope for how youth can help shape the future of their country.



### 31 August — International Day for People of African Descent

In 2013, the United States joined consensus on UN General Assembly resolution 68/237 to create the International Decade for People of African Descent (or Decade), observed from 2015 to 2024. The resolution provides a framework for the United Nations, member states, and civil society to implement activities that promote justice, development, and recognition for people of African descent. The Decade is an opportunity for a positive discourse on U.S. civil rights, highlighting over 50 years of progress under the U.S. Civil Rights Act and a narrative of common challenges that countries with a legacy of slavery confront.

In President Biden's statement commemorating Slavery Remembrance Day this year, he noted the following:



"Great nations don't hide from their history. They acknowledge their past, both the triumphs and the tragedies. Today is a day to reflect on the terrible toll of slavery, and on our nation's profound ability to heal and emerge stronger. Despite the horrors they faced, these men and women and their descendants have made countless contributions to the building of this nation and the continuous effort to realize the American ideal." While the United States has had 50 years of progress under the U.S. Civil Rights Act, there is still more to be done. This Decade provides an opportunity for the United States and all countries

alike to continue having frank conversations that promote equality for all and uplift the contributions people of African descent have made in their respective societies.



# Health Resources & COVID-19

## COVID-19

For updated information about COVID-19 in Haiti, please visit the [Embassy website](#). You'll find information about:

- **Where to get vaccinated**
- **Where to get tested**
- **Entry/exit requirements**
- **Quarantine guidelines**

## Haiti—Level 1: Low Level of COVID-19

Make sure you are vaccinated and up to date with your COVID-19 vaccines before traveling to Haiti. Anyone 2 years or older should properly wear a well-fitting mask in indoor public spaces. [Learn more from the CDC](#).

## General Health Guidance

- Make sure you are current on your vaccines, including tetanus and rabies.
- Know where doctors and the closest emergency room are in your area. Please visit the Embassy website for a list of hospitals and medical professionals in Haiti.
- Always keep basic medications and supplies on hand. Invest in a quality first aid kit and keep one in your car and at home.
- Always have travel insurance, including medevac insurance. If you need to be medically evacuated out of Haiti, you should contact a medevac company or an air ambulance service. Visit the Embassy website for a list of Air Ambulance Services.

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Protect  
From  
COVID-19.



## Useful Links

- [Embassy COVID-19 Page](#)
- [Travel Requirements](#)
- [Air Ambulance Services](#)
- [Hospitals in Haiti](#)

### Haiti—Level 4: Do Not Travel

The U.S. Department of State has renewed the highest level “[Level 4: Do Not Travel](#)” travel advisory for Haiti due to kidnapping, crime, and civil unrest.

#### If you are in Haiti:

- Sign-up for the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) to receive important information from the Embassy about safety conditions in Haiti, and help the Embassy contact you in case of emergency. Enroll here: [step.state.gov](https://step.state.gov)
- Remember that demonstrations, tire burning, and roadblocks are frequent, unpredictable, and can turn violent at any time. Emergency response, including ambulance service, is limited or non-existent.
- Always carry your cellphone and ensure it is charged before you travel. Ensure you have important numbers programmed into your phone. Consider using code names for family or friends.
- Avoid demonstrations and crowds. If you encounter a roadblock, turn around and get to a safe area.
- Arrange airport transfers and hotels in advance, or have your host meet you upon arrival.
- Travel by vehicle to minimize walking in public, and travel in groups of at least two people whenever possible.
- Always keep vehicle doors and windows locked with valuables out of sight.
- Exercise caution and alertness, especially when driving through markets and other traffic-congested areas.
- Do not travel in areas unfamiliar to you and be aware that navigation apps are highly unreliable in Haiti.
- Do not physically resist any robbery or kidnapping attempt.
- Always make sure your vehicle is in good driving condition.
- Travel at times when traffic is expected to be lighter; avoid travel after dark in Port-au-Prince.
- Ensure adequate spacing between vehicles to provide options for evading a potentially dangerous situation.
- Patronize shops or restaurants that provide secure, enclosed, and well-lit parking.
- Always inform someone, such as a family member or friend, of where you are going and what time you expect to return.
- Minimize broadly publishing your travel plans on social media.

**STEP**

Smart Traveler  
Enrollment Program

<https://step.state.gov/step/>

## Contact Info

### Email

- American Citizen Services: [acspap@state.gov](mailto:acspap@state.gov)
- Visas: [support-haiti@ustraveldocs.com](mailto:support-haiti@ustraveldocs.com)

### Phone

- +509-2229-8000

### Websites

- [American Citizen Services Website](#)
- [U.S. Embassy Port-au-Prince's Website](#)

### Address

U.S. Embassy Port-au-Prince  
Boulevard 15 Octobre  
Tabarre 41, Route de Tabarre, Port-au-Prince, Haiti

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### Useful Links

- [U.S. Embassy Facebook](#)
- [U.S. Embassy Twitter](#)
- [Haiti Travel Advisory](#)
- [American Citizen Services Facebook](#)
- [American Citizen Services Twitter](#)
- [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program](#)
- [Make an ACS Appointment](#)
- [COVID-19 Information in Haiti](#)

This newsletter is published by the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Port-au-Prince. Please pass this newsletter along to other interested people. If you would like to receive your own copy directly, sign up through the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program ([STEP](#)). Comments and suggestions regarding this newsletter are welcomed at [acspap@state.gov](mailto:acspap@state.gov).